

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims supercedes all previous listings of claims in this matter:

1. (Cancelled).

2. (New) A center beam rail road car having a longitudinal centerline, the railroad car being supported by rail car trucks at either end thereof, said rail road car comprising:

a deck for supporting lading, and a center beam assembly extending upwardly therefrom, said center beam assembly running lengthwise along said railroad car;

said centerbeam assembly including an array of posts extending upwardly of said deck, said posts having distal ends located away from said deck;

said centerbeam assembly including a longitudinally extending structural member mounted to said distal ends of said posts;

said centerbeam assembly having a polymeric member mounted laterally outboard of said longitudinally extending structural member, said polymeric member having a longitudinally extending face against which loads placed laterally outboard thereof can bear; and

said longitudinally extending structural member including a wall extending laterally inboard away from said longitudinally extending face of said polymeric member.

3. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 2 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member includes another wall extending in a predominantly vertical plane, and said longitudinally extending face of said polymeric member extends parallel thereto.

4. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 2 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member includes a predominantly vertically oriented web and said laterally inwardly extending wall of said longitudinally extending structural member is a predominantly horizontally extending portion of said longitudinally extending structural member.

5. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member is a tube.

6. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 5 wherein said tube is a steel tube.

7. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member has a hollow closed section.

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7 ~~8.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 7 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member is a four sided steel tube.

8 ~~9.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 7 wherein said longitudinally extending structural member is a rectangular steel tube.

9 ~~10.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 9 wherein said polymeric member is between 3/16 and 5/8 inches thick.

10 ~~11.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein said polymeric member stands proud of said posts

11 ~~12.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein said polymeric member stands flush with said posts.

12 ~~13.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein the polymeric member is made of a UV resistant polymer material.

13 ~~14.~~ (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 1 wherein said longitudinally extending face of said polymeric member is at least 6 inches wide.

14 ~~15.~~ (New) A center beam rail road car having a longitudinal centerline, the railroad car being supported by rail car trucks at either end thereof, said rail road car comprising:

a deck for supporting lading, and a center beam assembly extending upwardly therefrom, said center beam assembly running lengthwise between bulkheads mounted at either end of said rail road car;

said center beam assembly including an array of posts extending upwardly of said deck, said posts having distal ends located away from said deck;

said center beam assembly including a first longitudinally extending member mounted to said distal ends of said posts and running lengthwise between said bulkheads;

said center beam assembly having a second longitudinally extending member, said second longitudinally extending member running along said first longitudinally extending member from one post to an adjacent post;

said second longitudinally extending member having a laterally outwardly facing surface located laterally outboard of said first longitudinally extending structural member, against which laterally outwardly facing surface loads placed laterally outboard thereof can bear; and

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said longitudinally extending structural member including a wall extending laterally inboard away from said longitudinally extending face of said second longitudinally extending member.

15 16. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said second longitudinally extending member is mounted in a position chosen from the set of positions consisting of (a) proud of said posts; and (b) flush with said posts.

16 17. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said first longitudinally extending member is a tube.

17 18. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said first longitudinally extending member is a rectangular steel tube.

18 19. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said posts have flanges having laterally outwardly facing surfaces, and said laterally outwardly facing surface of said second longitudinally extending member is parallel to said laterally outwardly facing surfaces of said flanges.

19 20. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said laterally facing surface of said second longitudinally extending member is polymeric.

20 21. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said first longitudinally extending member is a rectangular steel tube, and said second longitudinally extending member is a polymeric member.

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